Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MEXICO 08722 032216Z

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 352

CONFIDENTIAL MEXICO 8722

E.O. 11652: GDS TAGS: PINT MX

SUBJECT: LOPEZ PORTILLO AS CANDIDATE

- 1. ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5, JOSE LOPEZ PORTILLO WILL BE OFFICIALLY SWORN IN AS THE PRI CANDIDATE, WHICH WILL BE OCCASION FOR HIS FIRST CAMPAIGN SPEECH.
- 2. LPEZ IS STILL RECEIVING LARGE GROUPS FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY WHO HAVE MADE PILGRIMAGE TO HIS RESIDENCE IN COYOACAN. THESE EVENTS HAVE PRODUCED SOME OFF-HAND COMMENTS AND SHORT RESPONSES TO GROUP LEADERS WHO MAKE RITUALISTIC SPEECHES OF SUPPORT. PRESS QUESTIONS HAVE ALSO PROVIDED OPPORTUNITY TO LOPEZ TO MAKE PUBLIC STATEMENTS.
- 3. IN GENERAL, HOWEVER, LOPEZ HAS AVOIDED MAKING SUBSTANTIVE STATEMENTS, OFTEN REFERRING REPORTERS TO THE RESPONSIBLE GOM OFFICIAL. WHERE HE HAS RESPONDED HE APPEARS TO US TO HAVE RESISTED TEMPTATION AFFORDED BY SOME LEADING QUESTIONS TO BE DEMAGOGIC. HE OFTEN RESPONDS IN HUMOROUS AND MILDLY SELF-DISPARAGING TONES.
- 4. ONE INDICATION OF DIRECTION JLP MAY BE TAKING WAS NAMING OCTOBER 2 OF NEW NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF PRI, WHICH HAD RESIGNED WITH FORMER PRESIDENT REYES HEROLES. SECRETARY OF ORGANIZATION FIDEL HERRERA BELTRAN (WHO RECENTLY ATTENDED CUBAN-SPONSORED CONFERENCE ON PUERTO RICO) WAS REPLACED BY LEOPOLDO GONZALEZ SAINZ, THE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MEXICO 08722 032216Z

POPULAR (AND FRIENDLY TO U.S.) MAYOR OF MONTERREY.

5. CAUSING GREATER IMPACT WAS THE APPOINTMENT OF PEDRO RAMIREZ VASQUEZ TO JOB OF PRI PRESS SECRETARY. RAMIREZ, CURRENTLY RECTOR OF THE NEW METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY, IS A WORLD RENOWNED ARCHITECT WHO DESIGNED MEXICO'S MEUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY. RAMIREZ, WHO ALSO WAS HEAD OF MEXICO'S 1968 OLYMIC COMMITTEE AND FIRST DIRECTOR OF MEXICO CITY METRO, HAS REPUTATION AS MAN WHO CAN GET THINGS DONE.

6. OTHER CHANGES WILL BE TREATED IN SUBSEQUENT, SEPARATE COMMUNICATIONS. $\ensuremath{\mathsf{JOVA}}$

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Subject: LOPEZ PORTILLO AS CANDIDATE

TAGS: PINT, MX, PRI, (LOPEZ PORTILLO, JOSE), (RAMIREZ VASQUEZ, PEDRO)
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